

My Name is Danny Thomas and I am the President and General Manager of KOAM-TV, the CBS Affiliate, licensed to Pittsburg, KS and serving the Joplin/Pittsburg Market. I am filing comments regarding the FCC's localism concerns. I am surprised in today's world of satellite television, satellite radio, and cable TV that the issue of local television stations providing localism could even come up. Since it has, here is a brief list of our ongoing efforts to serve our local viewers.

Local News

- KOAM-TV produces and airs five local News programs each day Monday through Friday. This has grown steadily over the years when only two local newscasts were common. Our Morning News, airing currently from 5:30am - 7:00am, started as the first half hour Morning News in the market. It then went to a full hour and now an hour and a half.
- In just the last year we started producing a completely unique 9:00pm Local News for a start up FOX in the market. Without our production of that newscast, they would not provide Local News due to the high cost associated with it.

Local Public Affairs Programming

- We air a weekly program produced locally by Missouri Southern State University called "Newsmakers." It is a half hour program dealing with local issues and local people in the News.
- We seek out unsung heroes and organizations throughout our area that make a difference in their communities with little or no recognition. We go to them, provide them with a "Strong Leadership Award" plaque and air the presentation over the week in a variety of time periods. Our ultimate goal is to show others how with just a little more effort, they could make a difference in their community too.

Emergency Programming

- KOAM has always invested heavily in Weather forecasting and reporting technology due to our location in a Tornado prone part of the country.
- When the National Weather Service shut down their Doppler Radar Site in our area, we invested \$400,000 to purchase our own. We have well over 1 million dollars in Weather related equipment to inform our viewers of weather conditions.
- Each year when Weather Watches and Warnings are issued for our area, we interrupt programming to provide that information and have purchased equipment to display it on the viewers screen at all times in effect.
- Three years ago when Tornadoes did extreme damage to Parsons Kansas, we were on the air Live and on the phone Live with one of our storm chasers who reported a Funnel Cloud on the ground coming into Parsons. We were recognized by the City of Parsons for telling people to take cover just minutes before the Tornado leveled part of their town.
- Last year we were on the air live tracking several tornadoes when one passed just a few miles from our rural station. We stayed on the air to warn those in the path. Many reported they took cover and were saved by our coverage. There were a few that lost their lives in that same group of tornadoes.
- On a non-weather note, we utilized the Amber Alert just last week when a child was taken from a school. Within 30 minutes of the broadcast, the child was safely recovered.

Civic Programming

- Each Year we replace the most watched program in the Market, Wheel of Fortune," with a locally produced program benefiting the United Way of Southwest Missouri, Southeast Kansas and Northeast Oklahoma. It is produced over about 30

days and shows where United Way contributions go and the show interviews people positively impacted by the contributions. It is used as the United Way Kick-Off.

Music and Civic Events

- We weekly have local entertainers and event chairpersons on our Morning News to perform and promote their individual events. Everything from Community Theatres to High School Plays, Community Fund Raisers to Community Concerts and any other group or event needing to get the word out visit our Morning News.

Education and area Kids

- KOAM has always had a soft spot for our area children and their Education. In 2000, KOAM was the recipient of the State of Kansas' Highest Award in Education, "The Friends of Education Award." Businesses and Manufacturers from across the State were nominated for this award given to just one.

- We air a locally produced segment called "Monday's Child." In it we feature a hard to adopt child in the area and interview them. We have had remarkable success sharing these children's stories and having someone adopt them.

- For the last five years we have provided Weather Systems to Local Schools. These schools have real time weather information gathering equipment on their roofs that they both access and utilize in their curriculum. To help make the learning more fun, KOAM shows their sights in our Newscasts with their real time current information. This effort not only provides needed resources to area schools, but also gives viewers real weather gathering equipment in their town to be viewed on our station in any newscast.

- Last year we added an automated school closing system allowing area schools and organizations to call a phone number and with a few push buttons of their phone, announce cancellations. The information without human intervention goes directly on the air and to our web site. Area Radio stations have found that just monitoring our web-site is the best way to stay current on school closings and use our service to notify Radio listeners of the information.

- Finally, we created and facilitate an annual "TOY BOX" campaign in our market. It ends just before Christmas and over \$80,000 in new toys have been donated by viewers in our market and been delivered to under privileged children in our market. Yes Virginia, there really is a Santa Claus, and in some towns, he's the local television station.

As you can see, in this world with so many television providers into the home who have no tie whatsoever to any local market, we are heavily involved. The fact is, in this new world of hundreds of channels, if we aren't local, no one will be.

Sincerely,

Danny Thomas
President / General Manager
KOAM-TV